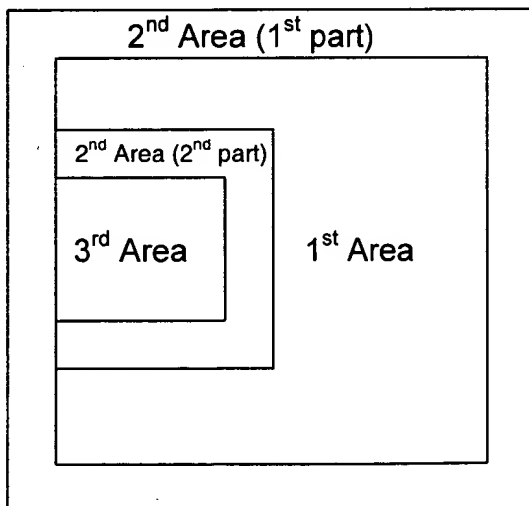


REMARKS

The Examiner's Office Action mailed May 11, 2005 has been received and carefully reviewed. Claims 1-20, 27, 28 and 30-33 had been cancelled, claim 21-26 had been withdrawn, and new claims 38-44 have been added. Thus, claims 29, 34-44 are pending in this application. For at least the following reasons, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

In the Action, claim 29 was objected to because of the informalities. Since claim 29 has been amended in conformance with the examiner's suggestion, Applicant believes the claim objection is no longer applicable.

In the Action, claim 29 and 34-37 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112. second paragraph. As to claim 29, the examiner asserted that an element couldn't encompass two other elements and at the same time be between that two elements. Applicant disagrees. Please refer the following sketch, which corresponds to Fig. 7B.



In the 1st area, the integrated circuit is formed. In the 3rd area, the pad pattern is formed. In the 1st part of the second area, the first dummy pattern is formed, and in the 2nd part of the second area, the second dummy pattern is formed. In this arrangement, it is possible that the second area encompasses the first and the third area, and the second part of the second area is located between the first and the third areas.

As to claim 36, claim 36 has been amended in order to identify the cited element. Thus, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is no longer applicable.

In the Action, claims 29 and 34-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Misawa in view of Madokoro. Applicant disagrees because of the following reasons. The invention defined in independent claim 29 relates to a semiconductor device. The characteristics of the invention claimed in claims 29 are:

(a) a semiconductor substrate having

- a first area where an integrated circuit is formed,
- a second area having a first part and a second part, and
- a third area where a pad pattern is formed, wherein the second area encompasses the first and third area;

(b) a first dummy pattern formed in the first part of the second area, wherein the first part is located along an edge of the semiconductor substrate; and

(c) a second dummy pattern formed in the second part of the second area, wherein a second part is located between the first and the third areas, the first and the second dummy patterns being formed as a single integral structure, whereby the pad pattern is encompassed by the first and second dummy patterns.

According to this structure described above, since (1) a first dummy pattern formed in the first part of the second area, and (2) a second dummy pattern formed in the second part of the second area, wherein the first insulating layer is not formed over the first and second dummy patterns, moisture cannot come into the circuit area through the first insulating layer. Specifically, entry of moisture from an opening for the pad pattern can be prohibited by the second dummy pattern mainly because the second dummy pattern and a part of the first dummy pattern encompass the pad pattern completely, and entry of moisture from the edge of the semiconductor substrate can be prohibited by the first dummy pattern because the first dummy pattern encompasses the semiconductor substrate completely.

However, Misawa does not disclose the characteristics (a)-(c) described above. The examiner asserts that the first dummy pattern of the invention corresponds to an enclosure 2 disclosed in the Misawa reference. This is clearly incorrect. The enclosure 2 disclosed in the Misawa reference encompasses a bonding pad 113, not encompass the circuit area. Thus, while the enclosure 2 may be able to prohibit the entry of the moisture from an opening for the bonding pad 113, the enclosure 2 cannot prohibit the entry of moisture from the edge of the semiconductor substrate.

Further, Madokoro does not disclose the characteristics described above either. While Madokoro simply discloses that bonding pads 8 are disposed in an peripheral area in which a PSG layer 6 is not formed, Moadokoro does not disclose any dummy layers at all by which entry of moisture is prohibited.

Accordingly, since Misawa and Madokoro alone or in combination neither show nor suggest the characteristics described above, claims 29 is deemed to be clearly patentable over Misawa in view of Madokoro, and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 34-37 depend from claim 29 directly or indirectly so that the rejection to these claims also should be withdrawn. Furthermore, newly added claims also depend from claim 29 directly or indirectly so that these newly added claims has no basis of rejection.

It is noted that this Amendment has been prepared using the requested new format. If there are any irregularities in this format, it would be greatly appreciated if Applicant's Counsel would be so advised

In view of the foregoing, the application is deemed to be in condition for allowance and such is earnestly solicited. Should any fee be needed, please charge it to our Account No. 50-0945 and notify us accordingly.

Examination of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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